Proposal to amend the Indian Forest Act

2629. SHRI DEBABRATA BISWAS: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to amend the Indian Forest Act;

(b) whether Government have the objective of increasing green cover; and

(c) whether this legislation enables Government to declare deforested land as suitable for emergency afforestation programmes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABULAL MARANDI): (a) Yes, Sir. Government has undertaken a detailed exercise to amend the Indian Forest Act, 1927 to provide for restoration, conservation and management of forests and also to consolidate the various State amendments for providing a uniform law thereby.

(b) and (c) Government have the objective of increasing green cover, in the National Forest Policy, 1988, by massive afforestation programmes with the involvement of people. The legislation under amendment aims to strengthen the provisions of forest protection to safeguard against qualitative and quantitative decline of forests.

Decay of Nature due to use of Plastic Material

2630. SHRI K.M. SAIFULLAH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that considering the World-wise condemnation against plastic as the material being non-biodegradable and non eco-friendly, widespread use of plastic in our country even in non essential place is further decaying the nature;

(b) whether the Ministry have evolved any specific strategy to face the grave situation; and

(c) if not, the Ministry's attitude in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) to (c) Based on the available information, the use of plastsic material including polythene bags is not banned in other countries. However, a proposal to prohibit the use of the recycled plastic carry bags for packing or carrying foodstuffs and other related materials is under consideration of the Government.

Demand of Rice and Sugar in Andhra Pradesh

2631. DR. MOHAN BABU: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the annual estimated demand of rice and sugar of Andhra Pradesh during the last two years;

(b) the actual allocation made from Central Government to Andhra Pradesh during the said period;

(c) whether State Government has demanded increase in the allocation during 1998-99; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS: (SHRI SATYA PAL SINGH YADAV): (a) and (b): *Rice*

The annual demand of Andhra Pradesh for rice and the actual allocation made from the Central Pool to the State during the last two years are as under:—

(In Lakh Tonnes)

	Demand	Allocation
1996-97 1997-98	25.20	24.90
(April-May, 97)	4.20	4.20

From June, 97 Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) has been introduced throughout the country including Andhra Pradesh. Under TPDS,